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The Determinants of Commitment among Homestay Operators in Malaysia

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Abstract

Homestay operators in Malaysia have long been pursuing their homestay program assisted by the government and their respective communities. However, the homestay operators are still confronted with issues such as the declining number of tourist arrivals which could not generate additional income as expected. This has created other problems such as low commitment level among themselves. Therefore, this study was undertaken to identify the determinants that affect the commitment among homestay operators in Malaysia such as quality of life attributes, attitudes, community roles and the role of government. This study used a survey method using a questionnaire involving 394 homestay operators throughout Malaysia. The study population comprised of 3,211 homestay operators who were registered with the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia as at December 2011. The sample was selected using probability sampling method through multistage cluster sampling procedure. A total of 396 questionnaires were distributed using face to face method but only 337 questionnaires were used for purposes of data analysis. The finding showed that the level of commitment among homestay operators was moderate. The four determinants of the study namely quality of life attributes, attitudes, role of community and the role of government have had positive relationships and become significant predictors to the commitment of the homestay operators in Malaysia.

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1. Introduction

Definition and concept of commitment contains a lot of meaning and perception of each perspective. The concept of commitment in the workplace still a challenge and frequently reviewed, particularly in the areas of management, organizational behavior and human resource management (Cohen, 2003; Somers, 2009). Although many researchers highlight the various definitions as described by Iverson (1996), but the researchers formulated two main things i.e. the commitment of treatment and committed attitude of commitment. According to Porter, Steers and Boulian (1974) organizational commitment is a commitment of the workers to their organizations through the three main components of trust and acceptance of organizational goals, willingness to serve the organization and a strong desire to be part of the organization concerned. An employee who has a strong commitment and willing to sacrifice his/her time and energy tend to remain with the organization in an effort to help realize the objectives and goals of the organization (Brewer, 1996; Yusnita, Wan Abdul Aziz, Mohd Shaladdin, & Yahaya, 2012).

According to Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) organizational commitment means the strength of a person's identity and involvement in the organization that they join. It can be categorized into three related factors, namely 1) a strong belief and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization; 2) the ability to increase the capacity of the organization concerned; and 3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. Therefore, commitment is the active involvement of the individual in the organization of their choice and are willing to take the time and energy to ensure the welfare of the organization. Another alternative view put forward by Meyer and Allen (1993) stated that the commitment is divided into three main components i.e. affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment and involvement is an emotional attachment to the organization, while continuing commitment is attachment based on the cost to be incurred should they leave the organization. Normative commitment also leads to feelings of devotion and loyal to the organization. These commitments form the employee's personal and direct impact on their organizations. If an individual is committed to their organization, they will be more successful and satisfied with themselves, their environment and their personal relationships also improved (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011).

According to Mohammad Shatar (2003) from the perspective of community development, local communities and their leaders should have a strong commitment and efforts to promote the community. The commitment shown by the local community will facilitate any transaction or related program development and planning of tourism in their area. A review by Yusnita, Aziz and Shaladdin (2012) showed one of the success factors of homestay development in Malaysia is committed community involvement in the homestay program in each village. In the study by Sirgy, Widgery, Lee and Yu (2010) they found that community well-being index attributes that are owned by the communities involved have a positive influence on the community commitment. They used four sets of data collected from communities in Flint, Michigan, United States from different years of 6915 data in year 1978, 397 in year 1990 data, 1100 data in year 2001 and 856 data collected in year 2006. These four data regarding the overall data shows that there is a positive relationship between community attributes to their commitments. The study also found that the attribute or community well-being index have a positive relationship with their overall life satisfaction.

While a study by Gomes (2009) which examines job satisfaction, organizational commitment and affective organizational changes over 153 hospitality industry employees. His research showed the relationship between affective organizational commitment to organizational change was a positive correlation ($r = 0.355$, $p < 0.01$) while the relationship between life satisfaction and organizational changes also show a positive correlation ($r = .253$, $p < 0.01$). The findings of this study show that the process of organizational change is expected to provide effective guidance on organizational commitment and so also increase the job satisfaction of the workers.

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